

REMARKS

Applicants submit this Amendment in reply to the Office Action dated October 17, 2005. As of the Office Action of October 17, 2005, claims 35-66 were pending in this application, with claims 35 and 53 being independent. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 35, 52-57, and 61 as allegedly being unpatentable in view of either U.S. Patent No. 6,068,603 to Suzuki or U.S. Patent No. 6,296,638 to Davison. In addition, the Examiner indicated that claims 36-51, 58-60, and 62-66 include allowable subject matter and were merely objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims. Accordingly, the Examiner indicated that claims 36-51, 58-60, and 62-66 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the subject matter of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Solely in the interests of expediting prosecution of this application, Applicants present the above amendments in order to place this application in condition for allowance. By this Amendment, Applicants have rewritten each of claims 36, 44, 48, 49, 58, 62, and 64 in independent form. In addition, claims 35 and 53 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, with the understanding that the subject matter of those claims may be pursued in a forthcoming continuation application. Finally, claims 37, 52, 54-57, and 61 have been amended to maintain proper claim dependencies in view of the cancelled claims. Therefore, claims 36-52 and 54-66 remain pending.

Conclusion

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 36-51, 58-60, and 62-66. Accordingly, in view of the claim amendments submitted in this reply, Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for

allowance and, therefore, a Notice of Allowance in response to this reply is respectfully requested.

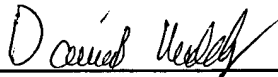
The Office Action contains characterizations of the claims and the related art with which Applicants do not necessarily agree. Unless expressly noted otherwise, Applicants decline to subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action. In discussing the claims in this Amendment, it is to be understood that Applicants are in no way intending to limit the scope of the claims to any exemplary embodiments described in the specification and/or shown in the drawings. Rather, Applicants are entitled to have the claims interpreted broadly, to the maximum extent permitted by statute, regulation, and applicable case law.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 
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